

# JCSTD/JCPTD – out with the old, in with the new

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EDITORIAL

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The Joint Committee for Specialist Training in Dentistry (JCSTD), established in 1995, has served its intended, UK-wide purpose. Through partnership working with the General Dental Council (GDC), and among the various stakeholders who have constituted the JCSTD, thirteen specialist lists are now established, underpinned by world class arrangements for training. In disbanding the JCSTD, its many, varied outcomes of best practice provide a springboard to a new era in which to create and promote a seamless continuum of postgraduate education, spanning foundation and specialty training in all relevant aspects of dentistry. To realise this goal a new strategic committee of different structure and constitution has been established – the Joint Committee for Postgraduate Training in Dentistry (JCPTD). In addition to overseeing and advising on the arrangements for foundation and specialty training in dentistry across the UK, the JCPTD will promote consistency of approach to training, together with robust, fit for purpose structures and quality assurance.

In time, it is anticipated that the JCPTD will, amongst other activities, be involved in revalidation processes, including both initial validation and the revalidation of specialists in both primary and secondary healthcare settings. Such arrangements will, in all probability, be the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the stakeholder members of the JCPTD and the GDC, given its responsibility for the regulation of education and training at all levels. Key components of the structure of the JCPTD will be the Advisory Board for Foundation Training in Dentistry (ABFTD) – a body which already exists, albeit in an early stage of development, and an Advisory Board for Speciality Training in Dentistry (ABSTD) which, in turn, will be supported by the existing Specialist Advisory Committees (SACs). The Terms of Reference and Standing Orders for the JCPTD may be found at <http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/fds/jcstd>. Regarding the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders for the ABFTD and ABSTD these will hopefully be approved by the outgoing JCSTD and subsequently confirmed by the new JCPTD.

## INCREASING FLEXIBILITY IN ACCESS TO SPECIALIST TRAINING

As the structure and arrangements for medical regulation catch up with those already in place for dentistry, with the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB) becoming part of the General Medical Council (GMC), dentistry is trailblazing new seamless arrangements for foundation and subsequent, quality assured specialist training, but

with increasing flexibility in respect to access to specialist training and, where appropriate, provision for prior learning and skill recognition. That said, the JCPTD will have a challenging agenda and programme of work, both in terms of inherited business and scaling new heights in standards and outcomes in the provision of high quality postgraduate education and training. An element of the anticipated developments will, in all probability, be the expansion of specialist training in environments other than the secondary care sector.

Dentistry and educational issues associated with the profession have entered a challenging period. Strategic publications centring on patient protection and the continuum of education for all healthcare professionals have stimulated debates and actions around issues of fitness to practice, professionalism and revalidation. With acceptance that the product of the undergraduate dental degree programme is the so-called 'safe beginner' appropriate for initial registration with the GDC, the JCPTD will play a critical role in the creation of suitably trained general – and specialist dental practitioners of the future. Through its membership, JCPTD will provide an excellent forum to smooth and facilitate the transitions between different levels of postgraduate dental education and training across the UK and beyond, reinforced by an ethos of lifelong learning, as promoted by all relevant stakeholders. Linked to this strategic aim will be considerations to strengthen the dental team, improve patient protection and enhance the delivery of care.

Notwithstanding the involvement of stakeholders in specialty training in Ireland in the JCPTD – an arrangement which enriched the deliberations of the JCSTD, it is hoped that the arrangements to be further developed through collaborative working between the GDC and JCPTD will be recognised as a benchmark in Europe and across the world. JCPTD, with its wealth of experience and expertise, has the potential for significant, wide-ranging impact across the spectrum of education, training and clinical service provision both home and abroad.

So, out with the old and in with the new, with the aim of providing a new strategic platform on which to build on existing strengths and commonality of approach, let alone foster new ground-breaking innovations in postgraduate training in dentistry. The JCPTD will hopefully enjoy a successful launch, and go on to command wide-ranging influence over the attainment of international excellence in foundation and specialist training in dentistry in the UK.

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